THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM :—" The number of persons arrested under the Madras Prohibition Act in the Salem district during 1952–53 was 13,802. Eleven thousand eight hundred and forty of them were convicted."

SRI K. V. RAMASWAMI :—" சம்பந்தப்படாத பாமர மக்களை போலீசார் வழக்குகளில் ஈடுபடுத்தி அவர்களை துன்பத்திற்கும் அவமானத்திற்கும் ஆளாக்குகிறார்கள். சம்பந்தபட்டவர்களை அந்த வழக்குகளில் சம்பந்தப் படுத்தாமல் அவர்களை விடுதலை செய்யும் போலீசார்கள் மீது சர்க்கார் என்ன நடவடிக்கைகள் எடுக்கப்போகிறார்கள்."

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM :—" I have no information about it."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Sir, will the Hon. the Minister for Prohibition be pleased to tell the House, out of the total number convicted, what is the number of men convicted and what is the number of women convicted? "

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM :—" I have no information with me on that point now."

SRI A. APPU :—" May I know, Sir, whether this district occupies the first rank in the matter of Prohibition offences? "

THE HON. SRIMATHI JOTHI VENCATACHELLUM :—" A separate question may be put."

Elections to panchayats.

* 212 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether panchayat elections in the State have been completed;

(*b*) whether all the panchayats in which elections have been held, were those in existence prior to the passing of the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950; and

(*c*) whether any new panchayats have been formed under the provisions of the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950 ?

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" (*a*) Yes, with the exception of a very small number.

" (*b*) Of the panchayats for which elections have been held a few had been newly constituted after the inception of the Madras village Panchayats Act, 1950.

" (*c*) Yes."

SRI V. R. KRISHNA AYYAR :—" Sir, are the Government aware of the observations of the Honourable High Court regarding the desirability of secret ballot in panchayat elections, and would the Government abolish the system of voting by show of hands and introduce the secret ballot system in respect of elections to panchayats to be formed? "

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THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" It is under the consideration of the Government."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, the Hon. Minister did not answer my question direct. He said ' a few '. May I know what ' a few ' means, and what proportion it would bear to the total number of panchayats to be constituted under the Act of 1950? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" Sir, there are about 19,000 villages in our State. At present there are 4,300 minor panchayats and 238 major panchayats. Therefore, there are yet so many villages to be constituted into panchayats."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" My question has not been answered, Sir. The Hon. Minister said ' a few ' panchayats had been constituted after the 1950 Act. I want to know the exact number of panchayats that have been constituted after the passing of the 1950 Act."

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" There is some difficulty in getting the figures. Recently the separation of Andhra took place, and as a result some old panchayats which were big were bifurcated into two. Again some small panchayats were amalgamated into one single panchayat. Therefore there is difficulty in collecting the figures at present."

SRI V. K. RAMASWAMY MUDALIAR :—" Sir, when the electoral rolls are ready, and when there is adequate staff, why is the progress so slow in the constitution of these panchayats? Will the Hon Minister please explain? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" The Government ordered that till the elections to the old panchayats were over, no new panchayats should be formed."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, may I know the total number of panchayats that were in existence before and after the Act of 1950 came into force? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" I do not have the figures with me now."

SRI T. ANANTA PAI :—" Are the Government satisfied, Sir, with the elections recently held under the system of open voting by show of hands, and was there no protest against this system of voting? "

THE HON SRI K. RAJARAM :—" Protests were only from a few."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Arising out of the answer given, is it the inference of the Hon. Minister, Sir, that the Government are incapable of providing us with the exact number of panchayats that have been constituted, or is it the incapacity of the Government officials to collect the figures? "

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THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" I have already said that elctions for 4,300 panchayats are over. The hon. Member wants to know the number of new panchayats. There is some difficulty to collect that figure, because, as I already said, many big panchayats have been split up into two or three. Are we to take them as old panchayats or new panchayats? "

SRI R. S. ARUMUGAM :—" ஹரிஜன மெம்பர்களுக்கு பஞ்சாயத்து போர்டுகளில் அதிகமான பிரதிநிதித்துவம் இருக்கும்படி சர்க்கார் தக்க ஏற்பாடு செய்யமுடியுமா? ஹரிஜன மெம்பர்கள் அதிகமான அளவுவர முடியாத நிலையில் ஹரிஜனங்களைப் பலவார்டுகளிலும் பிரித்துப் போட்டிருப்பது சர்க்காருக்குத் தெரியுமா? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" It is not correct, Sir. I know in so many panchayats the majority of the members are Harijans."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, has it been represented to Government that the lifting of hands by women is considered to be an immodest act? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" In the Assembly also, hon. Members are lifting their hands. They should not do so, but they should stand in their places."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, has it been represented to Government that the lifting of hands by women is considered to be an immodest Act, and that such a system of voting has been resented by women voters? What action have the Government taken on such a representation? '

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The difficulty about lifting of hands by women arises out of the dress that they wear. It is quite open to the gentleman presiding to accept a substitute gesture instead of the lifting of hands, which is objected to."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" സർ, ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രി പറയുകയുണ്ടായി : 1950 ലെ പഞ്ചായത്തു ആക്ട് പാസ്സാക്കിയശേഷം very few പഞ്ചായത്തുകളെ constitute ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളു എന്ന്. 1950 ലെ രാഷ്ട്രീയ പരിതഃസ്ഥിതി അല്ല ഇന്നു നിലവിലുള്ളത്. ഇന്നു ആ നിയമം നടപ്പിലാക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ കോൺഗ്രസ്സിന്നു ഭൂരിപക്ഷം കിട്ടുകയില്ല എന്നുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടാണോ ഇതു നടപ്പിൽ വരുത്താത്തതു എന്ന് ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രി പറയുമോ ? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, I have not understood the whole of the question. But judging from the gestures, I am answering the question now.

" It is true that this Government are finding considerable difficulty in forming new panchayats according to the Act that was passed before they took up office. We are now considering what we should do."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Sir, the Panchayat Act was passed in 1950. May I take it that the circumstances prevailing at the time of the passing of the Act are not in

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existence now, and because the Congress party in power here will not get a majority in the panchayats, elections to panchayats are being postponed?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—"I think, Sir, I have answered the question. The insinuation is not correct. I have answered that it is due to the difficulty of carrying out the Act, and it is not because of any desire to strengthen one party or another."

SRI V. R. NAGARAJAN :—"Sir, there seems to be a lot of confusion regarding local self-Government administration, whether it is in regard to districts boards or the contemplated taluk boards, or the existing panchayat boards or the panchayat boards to be constituted. Would the Government constitute a high level committee to go into the whole question instead of merely changing the structure of the district boards and bringing in the taluk boards, so that, even if the committee should take a long time to arrive at a conclusion we can get rid of the whole trouble that is there at present."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—"Sir, I welcome the suggestion. We will give the suggestion our utmost consideration."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—"Sir, whereas the Government have expressed a difficulty in carrying out this Panchayat Act passed in 1950, for the passing of which this Cabinet is not responsible, will the present Government consider the desirability of scrapping that Act and bring forward a Bill which would suit the environmental conditions in our State?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—"If the committee, that is suggested, is appointed, we may even do what has just now been suggested."

Extension of the term of the present incumbent of the post of the Secretary to the State Legislature.

* 213 *Q.*—SRI K. ARANGANATHAN :—"நான் இந்தக் கேள்வியைக் கேட்கிறேன்."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—"கேள்வியைக் கேட்கிறேன் என்று சொல்வதற்குப் பதிலாக, 'கேள்வியைப் போடுகிறேன்' என்று சொன்னால், அது நன்றாக இருக்கும்."

* SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state the necessity to extend the term of the present incumbent of the post of Secretary to the State Legislature? 9-20 a.m.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—"The term of the present incumbent of the post of Secretary to the State Legislature was extended in the interests of the work of the State Legislature on the advice of the Speaker and the Chairman confirmed by the Public Service Commission."